

Town of Hampton



*Department of Resources and
Economic Development*



**Hampton Beach Area Commission
100 Winnacunnet Road
Hampton, New Hampshire 03842**

**Town Hall – Selectmen’s Meeting Room
Monthly Meeting –April 24, 2014
7:00 PM**

MINUTES

In Attendance:

John Nyhan, Chairman, Town of Hampton
Fran McMahon- Rockingham Planning Commission
Bob Preston- Hampton Chamber of Commerce
Bill Watson, Vice Chairman-NH Department of Transportation
Rick Griffin, Hampton Representative
Michael Housman, Operations Supervisor, DRED (Seacoast
Parks/Recreation)
Dean Merrill, Citizen at Large
Rich Reniere, Hampton Beach Village District

Excused: Chuck Rage, Hampton Beach Village District

Absent: 0

Other:

Anne Marchand, Secretary
Bob Ladd, Hampton Beach Village District

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Introduction of Commissioners.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Related to Agenda Items.

Mr. Charlie Preston spoke to the Agenda item relating to Land Use and Infrastructure. He stated that the Master Plan calls for long-term vision and cautioned that the buyers beware as elevations need to be reviewed. He said that, added to the equations, the Planning Board has to take a hard look development. Further, with regard to Flood Insurance, he reported that FEMA is having a program at the Newbury Fire Station on April 29th. Also, on May 7th, a full-length documentary Shored Up is being presented. This film is about storm surges and the rising sea levels.

He also reported that the HBVD is having a meeting on May 14th at 5:30 p.m. with the DPW, Police and Fire Chiefs to discuss their issues.

Mr. Preston question when there would be HBAC discussion about the traffic lights at Ashworth and Brown.

Mr. Nyhan said the meeting is to be scheduled soon.

Mr Watson reported, with regard to Mr. Preston's questions at the HBAC meeting on March 27th, there is signage on Ocean Boulevard with direction to Rt 95 to assist people getting off the beach. He further stated that visibility is an issue; but, if the Town wants to consider additional signage, it should determine the best place for visibility.

Mr. McMahon pointed out that FEMA is having a Meeting in Hampton at the Marston School on May 5th.

APPOINTMENTS

1. DRED's Seacoast Regional Manager – Brian Wilson

Mr. Housman introduced Brian Wilson who has been hired as the Seacoast Manager. Mr Nyhan welcomed Mr. Wilson and reported that the HBAC will be supportive of what he tries to do. Further, that HBAC often offers comments to DRED. Mr. Wilson was invited to provide his background experience.

Mr. Wilson thanked the HBAC for inviting him to meet with them. He stated he is happy to be back on the seacoast; that he attended UNH and from 2000 through 2008 lived on the seacoast. He said he has been involved in parks and recreation for 15 years and attended Paul Smith College majoring in and receiving a Recreation Management and Policy Degree.

He worked in Dover as a full-time recreation staff person prior to moving to Connecticut. He worked in the towns of Essex and Canton, CT., and for five years managed the facilities, pools, and worked with the Boards and Commissions. He is glad to be back in NH as it has a more outdoor recreation setting, and the seacoast is the nicest place he has ever been.

Mr. Wilson stated he is now on board and is tuning in to the existing staff and learning from everyone along the seacoast as well as in Concord. He feels he has a good grasp and is ready for summer.

Mr. Preston asked if he will be working out of the building in Hampton, and Mr. Wilson responded that he will be working from Hampton.

Mr. Reniere asked about current and future staffing. Mr. Wilson stated there are now about 20 seasonals and three year-round. There is currently a vacancy for a program assistant. He reported that he is starting to bring in more seasonal employees and applications are coming in. Life Guard training and re-training begins the first week in May and park operations and maintenance will increase closer to the summer season. In total there will be 150 people on board during the season, serving in many different components.

Mr. Griffin stated he has worked closely with people in this position and looks forward to working with him.

On question of Mr. McMahon, Mr. Wilson stated that 95% of his time will be spent on Route 1A.

Mr. Nyhan stated he is being selfish in that he would like to see Mr Wilson around Hampton a lot, and it will be good to have a “foot soldier” in the area to deal with concerns, questions, and recommendations. He spoke to Mr, Wilson, stating that he could help build good communications, and wished him well and good luck.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

MOTION: It was moved by Mr Merrill to accept the Minutes of the March 27, 2014 Meeting as presented and edited.

SECOND: Mr. Griffin

VOTE: 8 in favor, 1 excused

MOTION

PASSED

CHAIRMAN’S REPORT:

1. Annual Report – Appointment with BOS

Mr. Nyhan met with the Selectmen and provided them with an update on the Annual Report. He reported the meeting went well.

2. Update meeting with Planning Board re: Transportation Grant

Mr. Nyhan said he was scheduled to meet with the Planning Board on April 16th; however, the meeting was postponed and will be rescheduled to a date in May.

3. Proposed Community-wide Seminar – Right To Know Law

Mr. Nyhan reported that he is looking at three organizations to sponsor the Right To Know Workshop for the public. The organizations would include the HBAC, Board of Selectmen, and the Hampton Beach Village District. If this effort is supported, it would be good for all board and commissions as well as residents to be able to understand the Right To Know. Mr Rage has indicated the HBVD will cooperate financially. The Board of Selectmen have been approached and they are in favor of the workshop. An Attorney, who has Hampton as a client, has been identified. Attorney Matt Upton is an expert on the Right To Know law in MA and would come to Hampton to give a one hour presentation. The fee would be \$300.00 and divided as 1/3 the town, 1/3 the HBAC, and 1/3 the Village District. People from the general public may look at the Right to Know Law from a different perspective following the workshop.

MOTION: Mr. Nyhan moved to have the HBAC support and sponsor a public Right To Know Workshop in the Selectmen’s Meeting Room, Town Hall, date to be determined. Further, to financially support the workshop with 1/3 of the \$300.00 fee.

SECOND: Mr. Griffin

VOTE: 8 in favor 1 excused

MOTION PASSED

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Mr. Housman reported that the balance remains at \$19,765.75.

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Griffin to accept the Treasurer's Report

SECOND: Mr. Reniere

VOTE: 8 In Favor 1 excused

MOTION PASSED

Mr. Housman and Mr. Nyhan reported there has been an inquiry on the HBAC Fund, and it requested information on the money expended and gained during the "Gala". DRED provided a full document expense report of all revenue brought in and expenses paid out. The Memo of Agreement by DRED and the State of New Hampshire was attached to the response.

TRANSPORTATION GRANT

1. Consultant Selection Update (Watson)

Mr. Watson reported that a letter to the consultant chosen (VHB) was sent on April 11, 2014, and it is expected a fee proposal will be received in early May. VHB is the firm chosen by the HBAC. Gordon Levy is the lead person and Mr Watson feels we will be well-served.

It was reported that April 29th is the first hearing on the bill for the 10-Year Transportation Plan.

Mr. Watson stated that the House passed the first gas tax in 22 years, and the Governor is preparing to sign it into law. The tax will be an increase of 4.2 cents beginning July 1, 2014. The \$32 million per year in additional funds will be to provide funds to the Bridge Program and provide funds to fix deteriorating roads and finish I-93. 12% off the top goes back to the communities in Block Grant funds are to be used for local highways.

Further, this and next summer, 500 miles of roadway will be repaved. This is an annual goal, and the tax increase will allow for reconstruction of secondary state routes and roads that are falling apart. These roads have not yet been identified. District engineers are making decisions for bridge projects. This is important to the State and north country. This is a start in the right direction and a lot more revenue will be needed to meet all the needs. A Web Site will be up and running this week. The site will provide those who want

to see where the funding is going, can go on line and be informed.

Mr. Griffin asked if the vote easily passed. Mr. Watson stated that the House was easier than the Senate, as the Senate took lots of time and modified the bill quite a bit. Votes in the Senate were supportive. The Senate vote was 15 – 9 and the House voted 193 – 141.

Mr Nyhan questioned the Block Grants, and Mr Watson stated that Block Grants have to go to municipalities. The HBAC cannot apply as this is an automatic distribution of funds to communities. How the communities prioritize is a local decision. Block Grant funding is based 50% on population and 50% on local public mileage.

1. Local Matching Update (Nyhan)

Mr. Nyhan will report on the Matching Update in May.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. DRED's upcoming Operational Public Meeting – 4/26/14 (Housman)

Mr. Housman reported that there will be a Community Meeting on April 26, 2014 in the Seashell from 10:00 a.m. to noon. The meeting will consist of introducing the staff as well as operational updates.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Master Plan Presentations

a. Land Use – Mr. Nyhan and Mr. McMahon

Mr. Nyhan stated he and Mr. McMahon met last week to go over the Land Use component of the Master Plan. They reviewed all the general areas in the subject area and, after reviewing and highlighting key areas, they questioned “where are we today”. It is important during the next months to look at where we are regarding any changes and any of the areas. As an example, whether land use at Hampton Beach has changed over the last 13 years. A lot of aspects of the facts within the Master Plan should be reviewed and updated wherever there is a factual number or altered decisions going forward.

Mr. Nyhan suggested the Commissioners look at the recommendations and strategies in their presentation, focusing on the review of the sections and attempt to determine where we are today and what are some of the strategies that should be going forward. Further, to determine which ones should be priorities going into September.

Mr. Nyhan stated that Land Use covers North Beach, Hampton Harbor, and Kings Highway. He noted that nothing has been addressed with regard to Hampton Harbor. He recommended that the HBAC have a meeting with the Port Authority to discuss their needs and issues. Further certain areas that cross over Rt 1A to a small section of the harbor are zoned as “general”. People came in with applications for Condos; however, that area is not zoned for condos. There are other areas that should be looked at, not just from the Ashworth Hotel to the end of the beach. There should be focus from High Street to the Harbor.

Mr Nyhan said a lot of the information provided also dealt with open space. He recommended that the HBAC take time, starting in September, to go through and update the statistics; and, move forward with an update dealing with any zoning issues brought up for discussion. He questioned what comprises “Open Space”. Further, view where we are today, what has been accomplished, and determine priorities.

Mr. McMahon stated that there are short-term strategies as noted in section 3b; and, a lot has been accomplished through the State Park reconstruction. Items that have never been put into place, such as signage and crosswalks, should be able to be done on a priority basis and at a relatively low cost.

With regard to defining neighborhoods, there are 11 between the harbor and Boar’s Head. The residential areas should be distinguished from business and commercial; and the residential areas should look like

each other, unique in and of themselves. Keeping neighborhoods is a good idea, and consolidating is important. Land use in that area is good, appropriate, and should stay as is.

With regard to historic buildings and landmarks, St. Patrick's Church and the Casino are the only two he could identify.

He noted that the Zoning Ordinance has changed several times. There is a requirement to have commercial on the ground floor of buildings to N Street. This seems to be working well. Also, the height restrictions have been changed from Ashworth to F Street, 70 feet with 10 feet for mechanicals.

Mr. McMahon stated that with regard to building design and quality, the Commission has addressed this in the past and had adopted design standards for buildings in the beach area. The Planning Board does not have a design criteria. It should be discussed how to handle this item by bringing into the Planning Board and the HBAC. There will be debate, he stated, as with any architect review.

Mr. McMahon noted the changes in requirements for multi-family units. The 40 foot setbacks are impossible to accomplish at the beach. The Zoning Board has been wrestling with this for many years and has been granting variances, which is an implementation of the Master Plan.

Parking in this area through the Master Plan, should be carefully reviewed. There are four major players which include the State, DRED, HBAC, and Precinct/Private/Town and PDA control. It might make sense for the four public entities to sit and talk about the best way to manage parking and communicate the options that are available. The Parking Study talked about many of those things. It is important for this item to remain in the Master Plan.

With regard to Design Review of signage, Mr. McMahon stated that there should be uniformity in signage and the appropriate players need to get together and sort through the details, particularly as relating to the signage issue. Enforcement will remain a problem. It is not there, and he does not see it coming.

Mr. McMahon spoke of the meeting at the Marston School presented by FEMA, regarding flood zones. There are potentially major impacts that need to be looked at.

The NH State Park has been done and done well. This is positive and a big accomplishment.

Mr. McMahon noted that Ocean Boulevard could become friendlier by adding benches, pergolas, restrooms, etc.

Regarding the Long-term strategies, Mr. McMahon referenced a new village center, stating that some areas at the center of the beach have just been rezoned and would be appropriate for creating a village within the area between Ashworth and Ocean Blvd. There is a lot of vacant land and properties not of high use north of D Street. This should be looked at with a vision of what people want the portions of the beach to look like.

It was noted that on the west side of Ashworth Avenue there is a lot of property backing up to the marsh and is subject to flooding. Most is zoned RB (10,000 SF lots) which are bigger than any of the lots. This has to be thought through and managed because of the density.

Mr McMahon stated that there are policy discussions that were never a part of the original Master Plan which would have impacts on the local infrastructure. This needs to be recognized; however, people are not addressing at this point.

Mr Nyhan stated that if one looks at the Master Plan, an advisory group was formed and it talks about things we should be doing around the harbor; i.e. access and capacity. Along with the items Mr. McMahon has mentioned working with the PDA should be included, as well as anything going on with the harbor.

Mr. Nyhan also noted that the criteria-based evaluation program is a great tool. Each section should be reviewed rating which areas are important, which more important, etc, and; further, to prioritize those areas of focus from May 2014 to May 2015.

b. Infrastructure - Mr. Housman

Mr. Housman stated that under Infrastructure and Public Facilities he focused on the Town public facilities and reviewed existing conditions. The plan talked about fire and police safety and a large portion of the Plan is making sure safety concerns for the beach area are addressed.

A portion of the review dealt with Town water systems and supplies. The facts should be updated as needed.

There are 135 miles of water mains and the systems should be monitored for water quality. Utilities and gas issues were also reviewed.

There are four strategies and recommendations outlined in the Master Plans.

1. Adequate public facilities to support the needs and operations of the police and fire departments.
There have been significant accomplishments in both departments with the new police building and fire stations.
2. Implementation to upgrade water, sewer, and stormwater systems.
There has been planning and implementation for water and sewer; however, there are long-term plans for improvement of water, sewer, and drainage infrastructure.
3. Link investments and plans for water and sewer systems to the capital improvement programs as part of land use.
Ongoing.
4. Rehabilitate and enhance the State Marina with upgraded facilities for both commercial fishermen
and recreational users.
State Marina has upgraded both commercial and recreational facilities which was part of the DRED plan for the ports and harbors in 2005 Further a Coastal Risk and Hazard Commission was formed which is working on coastal issues.

Mr. Nyhan stated that a lot in this section of the Master Plan is on schedule or ahead of schedule. One area that might considered for further discussion is in the water and drainage portion. And, further, Ocean Boulevard is still faced with drainage issues. This should be put on the Agenda for December as a priority for HBAC recommendations.

Mr. Griffin stated that the drainage issues on Ocean Boulevard needed to be taken care of, and Mr Housman said that drainage is the next task.

Mr. Reniere stated that the 2001 Master Plan was on target regarding the Police and Fire Department.

Mr. Nyhan commented that King's Highway and Boar's Head need to be added to the issues, in that with one major storm, King's Highway floods and there is no place for the water to go. This will cost millions of dollars to fix; however, it should be recorded in the Master Plan as it is an issue that should be addressed.

Mr. Griffin reported that the Town spent \$4 million on King's Highway and noted that there is a proposed sewer charge for future development. He is blaming this on the new zoning for the area.

Mr. McMahon stated there are clay pipes all over town and water ends up in the plant, which is at capacity. Mr. Griffin suggested that, if a sewer charge is put in place, the money should be set aside for the problems with the water treatment plant.

Mr. Houseman stated that at South Beach, DRED has started a process to improve drainage and water runoff. This should be taken care of by 2015.

Mr McMahon stated there has never been a Master Plan for parking and long-term development.

Mr Griffin commented on the change of crosswalks in Kittery. They have a 3-D appearance. These, he said, are needed at the beach, and all throughout Hampton.

Mr. Preston spoke to "Gateway Ideas" at North Beach and the Harbor as this would attractively extend the beach.

2. Other New Business

Mr. Nyhan announced that at the May 22, 2014, meeting, reports will be heard by Mr. Rage and Mr. Reniere, Mr. Watson and Mr. Preston, and Mr. Merrill and Mr. Griffin. Mr. Merrill and Mr. Griffin will not be present and will submit their reports in writing.

Mr. Nyhan reported there have been good conversations with developers of new properties. Mr. Griffin questioned if there was some way the HBAC could find out about future developments and encourage the developer(s) to come before the HBAC.

ADJOURN:

MOTION:	Mr. Griffin moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 p.m.
SECOND:	Mr. Reniere
VOTE:	8 in Favor, 0 Opposed to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 p.m.
	MOTION PASSED

Respectfully Submitted,
Anne Marchand, Secretary